

# Aggieland

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## ALSO INSIDE

MAROON & WHITE GAME  
LEGENDS GAME  
HUNTER COLEMAN  
ASHLEY WALTERS  
AND MORE...

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# contents



## FEATURES

**16**

### **Hunter Coleman Q&A**

Baseball catcher and first baseman comes home to Aggieland to play.

**18**

### **Ashley Walters Q&A**

Softball catcher wraps up stellar career for the Aggies.

**20**

### **Legends Game**

Johnny Manziel and a group of legends entertain the crowd with a little flag football game.

*BY ROB HAVENS '88*

**22**

### **The Maroon & White Game**

Jimbo Fisher uses scrimmage as final practice to build his program.

*BY ROB HAVENS '88*

## IN EVERY ISSUE

**04** Publisher's Note

**06** Snapshot

**13** Scoreboard

**30** The 12th Man

**On the Cover:** After seeing his first Aggie Ring Ceremony and watching the reactions of the players and their families, Coach Fisher stated at Coach's Night that the helmet represented all of those that wear the ring. Photo by Rob Havens '88



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# Howdy Ags!

I can't believe we are wrapping up another year of Aggie sports. The long, hot days of summer are upon us and football season is just around the corner which means our next issue will be the football preview.

One thing that helps us all get through this part of the year is the news from recruits verbally committing to Texas A&M. It's obvious that Coach Fisher and his staff are not only getting the best talent out of Texas but they are scoping the entire country for the best players.

There are only four active coaches that can reach out to a recruit and tell them that they have won a national championship. Jimbo Fisher brings a whole new dimension to our recruiting ability.

Our new signees are on campus and the team is going through the summer grind as they prepare their bodies for the fall. The staff is busy running camps and hosting recruits that we hope to sign in the early signing period.

The excitement is building for a season that will be kicked off with three home games played at night. Our favorite kind! On top of that, two of the first four games will be against teams that have won the national championship in the last three years.

I'm anxious to watch the Aggies take the field under the new coaching staff. The nation is watching to see what Coach Fisher can do at Texas A&M. Make your plans to get to Kyle Field and cheer on our Aggies!

Thanks & Gig'em Ags!

*Rob '88*



For real-time updates on all things Aggie sports, be sure to follow us on Instagram (@aggielandillustrated) and Twitter (@aggiemag).



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snapshot







## a hero's welcome...

Samantha Show put the final nail in the Baylor coffin as she hit a 2-run homer in the top of the fifth inning in the final game of the College Station Regional. The Aggies beat the Bears 10-4 and earned a trip to the Super Regional. The team remained undefeated at Davis Diamond closing out the regular and postseason with a 6-0 record.

Photo by Rob Havens '88









## “dox” ...

Although the Aggies had five players taken in this year's MLB Draft, the future looks bright with John Doxakis coming back for his junior year. The talented leftie had a breakout year in 2018 and finished the season as Coach Childress' best starter. He led the Aggies to their only regional win and carried a no-hitter into the eighth inning vs Auburn in the SEC Tournament.

Photo by Rob Havens '88.



snapshot

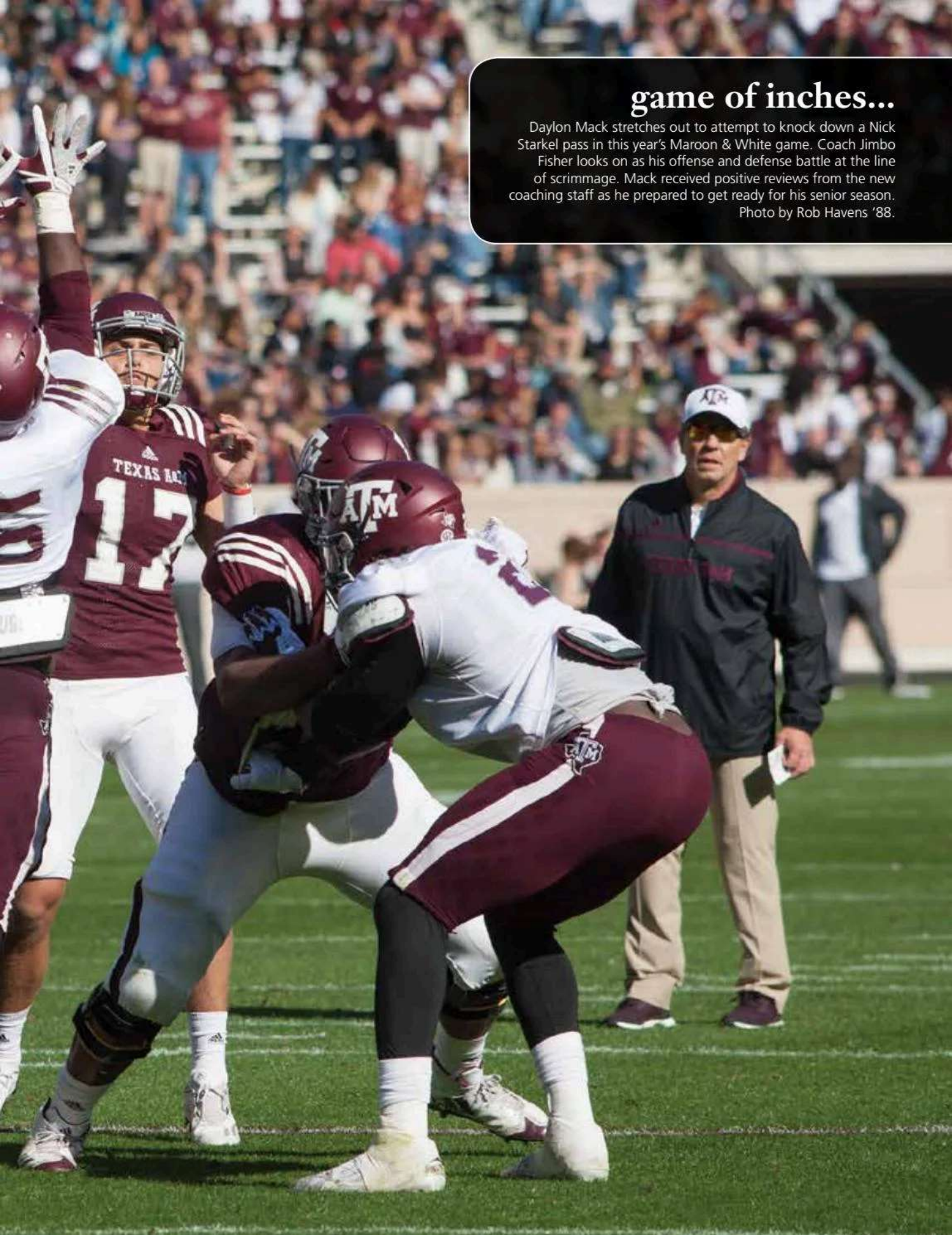




## game of inches...

Daylon Mack stretches out to attempt to knock down a Nick Starkel pass in this year's Maroon & White game. Coach Jimbo Fisher looks on as his offense and defense battle at the line of scrimmage. Mack received positive reviews from the new coaching staff as he prepared to get ready for his senior season.

Photo by Rob Havens '88.







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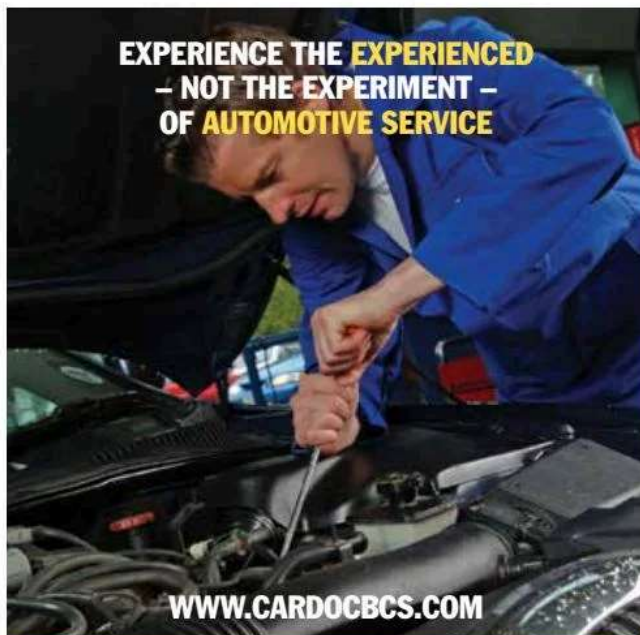
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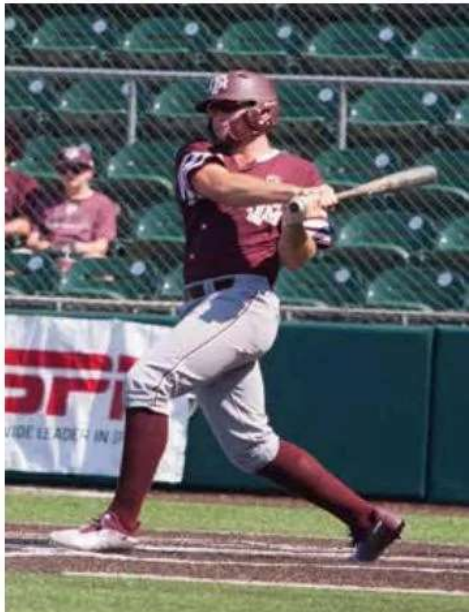
## scoreboard



**[softball]** Texas A&M was awarded a home Regional and took advantage by cruising through three games and imposing their dominance over Prairie View A&M, McNeese and Baylor. The Aggs scored 29 runs and only allowed five total in the three games. For their efforts, they earned a trip to Gainesville to take on Florida in the Supers. The Aggies had the first game in hand but the Gators found a way and won a heartbreaker in game one. Showing the heart of a champion the team battled back to win game two 5-4. Trailing in the deciding game in the last inning and down to their last out, Tori Vidales hit a two-run homer that gave the Aggies the 3-2 lead. In the bottom of the last inning, the Gators were down to their final strike but they came up with the goods and hit a three-run homer to eliminate the Aggies and end their season.

**[men's golf]** The men earned a #2 national seed and the opportunity to host twelve other schools in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. They responded by shooting a course record -27 under par to blow away the field and advance to the next round. The Aggies finished eighth in the next round to squeak into the final spot of teams that advanced to the Matchplay portion of the championships. In Matchplay the Aggs were paired up with the #1 seed Oklahoma State Cowboys on their home course. The Aggies battled all day and it came down to the last few holes but they were ultimately eliminated by the Pokes who would go on to win it all.

**[baseball]** The team experienced the highs and lows as they wrapped up their season. The Aggies went to Hoover for the SEC Tournament needing at least a win to secure an NCAA bid. They wound up playing some of their best baseball of the year defeating Vanderbilt, Georgia and Auburn before losing a 2-1 decision to Ole Miss. Texas A&M received a three seed in the Austin Regional and hammered Indiana in game one to earn the opportunity to face Texas. Unfortunately, the Aggs could not reproduce the magic they had the week before and lost the next two games to end the season.







**[women's tennis]** Texas A&M won the first game of the SEC tournament against Kentucky which advanced the team to face #2 Vanderbilt. The Doreas defeated the Aggies 4-1 in the quarterfinal match. The Ags earned an at-large bid to the Austin Regional and defeated Rice in the first round setting up a match against the Longhorns and former Aggie Head Coach Howard Joffe. Unfortunately, the Horns were too much for the Ags on that day and the team fell 4-0.

**[women's golf]** The Ags fell just short of advancing to the NCAA Championships when the team came in seventh place in the opening round of the Austin Regional. Maddie Szeryk advanced as an individual as she finished in second place with a -7 under par. She would finish tied for 17th in the NCAA Championships. Head coach Trelle McCombs was relieved of her duties at the end of the season and Scott Woodward said a national search for the new head coach would begin immediately.

**[men's tennis]** The Aggies made it to the finals of the SEC Tournament but fell to Mississippi St 4-3. They earned the fifth seed and hosted the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament. The team made a historic run, all the way to the program's first final four. They battled #1 seed Wake Forrest in the semifinal match on their home court. The Ags would battle back from an 0-3 deficit and the contest came down to the final pairing. The Deacons won the final match and advanced. Wake would go on to win the National Championship. It was an amazing season for the men.



**[track & field]** Aggie sophomore Tahar Triki won the triple jump competition at the NCAA Championships with a leap of 55 feet, 1 inch. The 4X400 relay team posted a runner-up finish and with 29 points the Aggie team finished seventh in team scoring. It was the squad's 11th consecutive top 10 finish in the NCAA Championships. Sammy Watson won the 800m final for the women's team despite the cold and rainy conditions. The team scored 15 points and finished 19th in team scoring.



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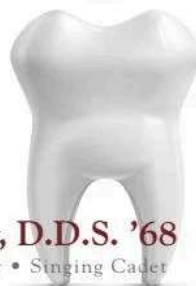


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# HUNTER COLEMAN Q&A



## **When did you start playing baseball?**

I remember organized baseball when you are like six year's old playing coach pitch and stuff but before that playing with my dad in the front yard. We have home videos actually one day it was raining and he set up a pitching machine in my house when my mom was gone. So things like that I remember playing baseball.

## **Your dad (David Coleman) was an assistant here years ago. Talk about the recruiting process when A&M started looking at you and talking to you about coming here.**

This is the place I called home growing up from the time I was two to seven. I had a lot of good memories here. Some of my first memories are from here. I guess it was always a place I wanted to be, so whenever they were recruiting me, it was a no-brainer.

## **And your little brother (Ty Coleman) is coming here soon?**

Yep, he'll be here next year. It's going to be a lot of fun. Last time we played together was in high school, two years ago. He's finishing up his senior season. I know he's looking forward to being here and being on the same team again it will be a lot of fun.



**Has the experience here at A&M been all that you hoped it would be?**

More! I remember coming to games here sitting behind home plate, I remember how loud it was. You never realize how loud it is until you are on the field in a big game, how rowdy the 12th Man can get. And how much of a game changer it can be. It's more than I expected for sure.

**Now your dad retired, did he basically do that so he could watch his kids play?**

I think that's part of it, definitely. Last year when he was coaching they would play the same weekends that we would play and he wasn't able to make it to as many games as he wanted to. He now has a lot more flexibility and freedom and he's down here almost every home weekend.

**Is it cool having a dad in the stands?**

Yeah, it's awesome! He has always been coaching and our schedules lined up so he made as many trips as he could, but sometimes he just couldn't make it. So now he can make almost every game, I like it a lot!

**You were a catcher in high school, talk about playing catcher and first base here.**

I played mostly catcher in high school but I played first base in summer ball and a few games in high school so it wasn't completely new to me. I guess I just kind of fell into that role last year when we needed it and kind of transferring into that role again this year, wherever they put me I'll put on a glove and go play.

**You're just a ballplayer, aren't you?**

(laughs) I guess so.

**Do you like the fact that you can be counted on to pretty much do whatever the coach asks you to do?**

Yeah definitely, I pride myself on being versatile fill whatever role they need me to fill. To do whatever it takes to help our team win.

**What do you think your brother will play when he gets here?**

I think he'll be a middle infielder for sure, he's kind of a smaller guy but he

plays a lot bigger than he is. He plays with a chip on his shoulder and that's what I respect a lot about his game and what a lot of people notice when they go watch him play. I think he'll be a middle infielder probably second base to start off but we'll see. We'll see where he ends up.

**What has been your favorite moment on the field here at A&M?**

Definitely winning the super regional here last year, going to Omaha. That was probably the most fun I've ever had on a baseball field just in general but to do it here at A&M was just a dream come true.

**It's hard to get there?**

Yes definitely! Not easy at all.

**What can you gain from last year's experience to get back there again?**

I think that just knowing it's a long year and there is going to be ups and downs. It's all about how you respond to those ups and downs and try to be the same team on a daily basis. Be the most consistent team and be playing your best baseball at the end of the year which is what we did last year and as long as you are getting better every day then eventually your going to be playing your best baseball at the end of the year.

**Do you see a lot of similarities between last year and this year?**

Yeah definitely. We have guys that are great teammates and willing to dump it out on the field every day and compete. I think that is something we hang our hat on here just coming out here and being ready to go.

**You guys had tough starts in conference play in both seasons but you guys have been resilient and now you're competing for an SEC title. Everything is still in front of you right?**

This league is the biggest challenge there is. You can't ever take a weekend off. No team can take a weekend off. The talent level in this league is unbelievable and its just about who wants it more that day and people come out to compete. It was a tough start but you always have a chance if you will come out and compete.

**What has been your favorite personal moment on the baseball field as an Aggie?**

I guess I'd say the regular season game against Texas, that was a fun one. That was one of the best at-bats of my life. There was a lot of foul balls. Some of those pitches I should have hit earlier in the at-bat but since that one I have been a lot more comfortable in the box a lot more confident as long as I have the mindset that I'm going to win that battle, I always have a chance.

**Coach Childress said that was a turning point in that game, would you agree?**

I think so, that was my third at-bat with two outs and runners in scoring position, my first two at-bats I didn't get the job done. Coming through that third time was definitely a good thing for turning the game around and my season around personally. I know the guys in front of me and behind me have been carrying the load all year so I think it was time for me to step up. Kind of do my part and do whatever it takes.

**You are pretty even-keeled, you don't get too high or too low. Is that just a part of your game?**

I think that is just how I've always played. There are a few times I've shown emotion on the field, but I think sometimes if you show emotion it can get carried away. Bad body language is something my dad taught me to stay even-keeled. Not showing bad body language and you are defeated. As long as you have good body language let everyone know in the ballpark that you are confident, that's half the battle.

**What is your favorite Aggie Baseball Tradition?**

Probably the "Ball 5" chant. I know if I was an opposing pitcher I'd have a hard time throwing a strike in there. You can tell that really gets in their head. My favorite as a kid was holding up your fingers for the number of train engines, that was the only one I could participate in as a five-year-old. One of the ones I wish we still had was the foul ball going up the netting behind the plate with the "Whoop Whoop." I guess that's gone for good. But that was a favorite of mine, too.



# ASHLEY WALTERS

## Q&A



### **How do you like the new stadium?**

It's awesome! I haven't totally moved in there yet, we've been going back and forth from Aggie Field to Davis Diamond. I thought it was a really great experience this past weekend to be able to play in it and have that much more fans in it to rally around you and to be able to play for the 12th Man.

### **What was the biggest difference playing on that field?**

The atmosphere I think. I think it did give us an advantage with all those fans around us and being able to get them in the game and that gets the other team on their heels.

### **When did you start playing softball?**

I played t-ball first when I was like five and then softball going right into little league. I mean I've been around it my whole life ever since I was a baby. My dad coached baseball so I was always around the sport.

### **So it's all you've ever known?**

Pretty much, except the four other sports I played in high school. I played volleyball, basketball, powerlifting and I threw in track, shot put and discus. I played all four years in high school at Center Point.

### **Did you always know you wanted to focus on softball after high school?**

Oh yeah, I always played select softball and so we would do that in the summer and some of the fall it was hard with volleyball and everything but my coaches understood that was the direction my potential was going towards.

### **Talk about your recruitment in coming to Texas A&M.**

I actually got into the recruiting process really late. I committed as a junior and the other girls in my class committed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade or freshman year. I got on a really competitive select team late and it kind of depends on what team you're on, your coach can get a hold of college coaches and make a name for you. I think I was first seen by Coach Evans or Coach Jackson in Colorado which is a really big tournament for softball that they hold every year and a couple of other showcases they just kept watching me and I eventually committed junior year.

### **Did you grow up being an Aggie fan?**

No, I did not! My mom actually graduated from UT and we were UT fans until high school. I kind of opened my horizons, so like I wanted to stay in Texas and just be on a good team that was what I was opened to. Texas A&M was interested in me and I came on a visit here and I fell in love with the campus and everything.



### **Did you break your mom's heart?**

More my grandpa's heart. He hated A&M but when I started playing for them he was all for it.

### **So do they now all wear maroon and white?**

Yes, my mom's a true fan, she's like an Aggie now (laughs) She's like half Aggie half Longhorn.

### **Well, she has two kids that go here now!**

I know (laughs).

### **Tell me about that, tell me about your little brother playing across the street.**

Oh, it's great! I think it may be a little hard transition for him from high school to college but I think he is really making it his own. He's just as hard of a worker as me and he's going to do everything he can to start and play in the starting lineup and get his opportunities.

### **Do you get to watch him much?**

Yeah except when I'm studying during the week and when they play the Thursday, Friday, Saturday series I watch a little bit, yeah I get to. And next year I'll be here too and not playing softball so I'll get to watch him play a lot more.

### **Do you get to help him as far as paving the way of being a student-athlete?**

Yeah if he has any questions or anything he can always ask me. They had to be here in the summer so he kind of got used to it the ropes with school, study hall, baseball practice and stuff like that. It's kind of like you got to do what you got to do. Time management, always on the go!

### **What has been your most memorable experience on the Aggie softball team?**

I would think going to the Women's College Worlds Series last year. That was like a dream come true and hopefully again this year.

### **What was the coolest moment for you personally?**

The last play when I got Lisa Fernandez tossed by making that play at home

plate. Almost dislocating my shoulder but still getting them out and tossing it to Riley and getting the double play.

### **Is it more fun to get an out or a big hit?**

I think I would choose getting a big out. Either a play at home or a throw down to second, a defensive play over offensive.

### **I heard Coach Evans talking about your percentage of throwing runners out at second, it's like crazy good do you take pride in that?**

I do. I worked hard on it because the first couple of years I was here my percentage was only like 30. I've always wanted that to be something I could do better and I could take control of so I worked really hard on my transfers and just getting my arm stronger and I've been able to throw out a lot more runners this year.

### **Do you see similarities between last year's run and this year's run?**

I do, I think we are starting to make more strides. Since the last game of LSU on I think we are making more strides towards like we were last year and really clicking together as a team. I can really see it starting to come together.

### **Are you a vocal leader or more lead by example?**

I'm more of a lead by example type of person. Kind of do things right by the book and do the extra work put the hard work in and hopefully, people will follow.

### **What is your favorite tradition at Aggie Softball games?**

I like when we line up before the game starts and do the Farmers Fight yell. I think that is cool! It's weird for the other team. I thought it was kind of funny when we played Auburn the other day in the first game, they were all lined up on the line and they were there because we had done announcements. They were still there when we were humping it and about to do the yell and it was really quiet and one of the Sugar Daddies said you can do the yell too and they just walked off (laughing)

### **Acoustically can you tell a difference at the new stadium?**

Oh yeah, I think so. It just seems more like a D1 SEC-like atmosphere. When we go to travel to different venues it's kind of more like that and I think that's going to help us a lot.

### **What is your favorite tradition overall of being an Aggie?**

I like Muster a lot. You know you're an Aggie and one day your name is going to be called. I think it's a really cool tradition that Aggies all around the world honor other Aggies.

### **How much influence did you have in your brother coming here?**

I don't think I had an influence on him coming here. I mean I know our parents can both be here and both watch us play. But I remember last year specifically he was a senior in high school getting committed we were over there (Blue Bell Park) hitting and Aaron was over there and Coach Evans like said, "Aaron come over here" and she started talking to him and like right after that he committed (laughs) I was like, "Jeez what did you say to him" (laughs).

### **Anything our readers might not know about you?**

I showed pigs in high school. We both did. That's interesting I guess. I've been showing since I was ten. We got a few scholarships we were able to use here. At the San Antonio Stock show I won Reserve Champion Guild, which is a female and I got a \$10,000 scholarship. (laughs) Yeah, show pigs! (laughs) Farmers Fight! (laughs)







# LEGENDS GAME

BY: ROB HAVENS '88

During halftime of the Maroon & White game, the fans were treated to a flag football matchup by some of Texas A&M's great former players. The Legends Game featured Johnny Manziel who participated as the all-time quarterback for both teams. Before the game even began Johnny surprised the crowd by catching a long field goal attempt under the crossbar and racing up the field. It was a treat for the fans to see #2 flying across Kyle Field again. The flag football game brought smiles to everyone as Manziel distributed touchdown passes to Robert Ferguson and DeVante Harris. Aggie greets Dat Nguyen and Terrence Murphy helped coach the two sides while Spencer Neely electrified the crowd with a pass breakup and one of his signature celebrations. He then screamed in the on-field microphone, "Not today!" It was definitely one of the highlights of the day. Manziel addressed the crowd after the game and encouraged them to continue cheering on the team reminding them that "the sky was the limit" moving forward.









# MAROON & WHITE

GAME GIVES PREVIEW OF THINGS TO COME!

BY: ROB HAVENS '88



In the past, the Maroon and White game has been called a scrimmage. It gave the fans an opportunity to watch the Aggies showcase their skills in a fun environment. Last year's fans even got to watch some players pull out a drum major's baton to celebrate after a big play. But this year's event wasn't about showing off, it was about going to work!

What we saw at this year's game was a three-hour practice meant to get us one step closer to a championship. The teams were divided up and drafted by the seniors and the contest was played like a regular game. Coach Fisher joked that nobody could gripe at him because he was the commissioner.

From the first kickoff, it was apparent that Jimbo would not be taking a passive approach while commentating with a sideline reporter during the scrimmage. He was coaching our guys up from the start. Yelling at guys and even the refs while coaching every minute of the game.

As I went back and forth along the sideline shooting pictures of the game, I could see his staff in position meetings with their players going over what they were doing wrong and what they needed to be doing right. It was very apparent that the staff and the players were in this

to win.

Both Nick Starkel and Kellen Mond had good days leading their perspective teams. Starkel was 26 of 42 passing while piling up 373 yards through the air including two touchdowns. Kellen Mond was 19 of 26 for 180 yards and three scores.

The biggest difference in the passing game was tight end Jace Sternberger, who received an award at halftime for team MVP for the spring. The talented JUCO transfer had eight catches for 147 yards and two touchdowns including a catch and score that netted 65 yards. Fourteen different players caught passes during the game accumulating 614 yards through the air.

Six different backs carried the ball and Kwame Etwi had the longest run of the day racing through the Aggie defense for a 55-yard touchdown. Trayveon Williams had 14 rushes during the scrimmage and was awarded the offensive MVP award for his work during the spring.

Continuing the theme throughout spring ball about physicality, Jimbo allowed his quarterbacks to endure some contact from the defense. Starkel was sacked by Daylon Mack on the first play of the scrimmage as the defensive tackle blew up his opposing blocker and

grabbed Nick from behind and yanked him to the ground.

Tyrel Dodson led both defenses with seven solo tackles. Derrick Tucker and Anthony Hines both had six tackles apiece for the White team. Roney Elam got the lone interception on the day as he stepped in front of a Nick Starkel pass and returned it 17 yards.

On special teams, Braden Mann punted for both squads and had 13 punts on the day averaging 43.3 yards a boot with a long of 58 yards. He also had six kickoffs with 4 touchbacks.

Third string quarterback Connor Blumrick also got in on the action as he took reps with both squads leading the Maroon team on an impressive drive and score in his first action on Kyle Field.

Aggie fans are used to the end of the game being an afterthought as players that are at the end of the depth chart get a chance to play. But Jimbo Fisher used the last six minutes to bring back the starters and see how his players reacted at the end of a game. The result was the most exciting part of the scrimmage as both teams competed to win.

Trailing by seven points Starkel took the helm and drove his team down the field for the tying score. The highlight of the drive was a catch up the middle by





Jace Sternberger who turned and raced to the goal line.

Not to be outdone Kellen Mond drove the white team down the field finding Kendrick Rogers for a 32-yard gain. He then went back to Rogers for the go-ahead score on a four-yard pass into the end zone.

With just :39 left in the game Starkel drove the Maroon team into scoring position. On the final play of the contest, he let it fly to the Spring Camp MVP Jace Sternberger who was surrounded by several defensive backs and the pass fell incomplete.

Jimbo taught Aggie fans an important lesson. Don't ever leave an Aggie game early, you might miss the best part! The White team raced onto the field to celebrate and then shook hands with their teammates.

It was exciting to get a glimpse of what we will see this fall. But for me, it was even more exciting to see our new head coach using every moment to help our team win a championship. It's easy to stand behind a podium and talk about what you expect to do here in Aggieland. It's much more difficult to make it happen. Watching Coach Fisher with our team gave me great hope in what he can accomplish here. Stay tuned!



























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